

# Disability Now

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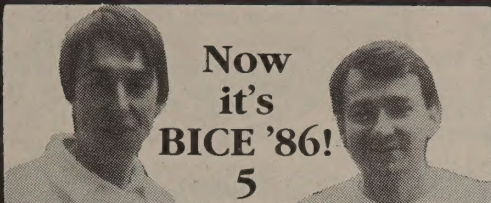
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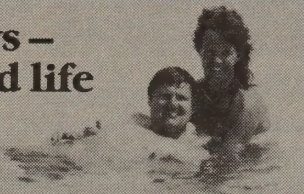
## 3 need PEOPLE

Understanding disability and personal relationships



Now  
it's  
BICE '86!  
5

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## Share your problems 10



John Hughes

### Will disabled people benefit from the new social security reforms?

## Help for some, “a major crisis” for others

The Government believes that its major proposals for reforming social security provide a simpler, more effective benefit system and will help low income families with children and disabled people on low incomes.

Norman Fowler, Social Services Secretary, talked of the “special attention which we give to disabled people in our proposals” when he launched his White Paper last month. “Overall, disabled people on low incomes will benefit significantly”, he said.

The Spastics Society does not agree.

“While we welcome the Government’s proposals to pay a double family premium for each disabled child in the family, to increase to £15 the earnings disregard for working disabled people, and to protect disabled people and carers within the SERPS scheme, there are other proposals which concern us deeply,” said John Cox, the director.

“For example, we believe that the decision to end additional allowances – especially the 10 directly related to disability – will create a major financial crisis for the most severely disabled people.”

Here are the Government’s main proposals, assessed by Linda Avery, the Society’s benefits expert.

### SERPS

(–) The State Earnings Related Pension (SERPS) will be assessed on “lifetimes” earnings not the “20 best years”.

(+) The Government has promised to protect disabled people and carers from the full affects of the change-over.

Comment: But they could be at a disadvantage because they tend to have low-paid or part-time jobs which would mean low retirement income.

(–) The SERPS pension inherited by widows and older widowers is to be halved.

(–) The Government is encouraging people to invest in private pensions.

Comment: It is notoriously difficult for disabled people to find insurance, and when they do the premiums are usually prohibitively high.

### Income Support

This will replace Supplementary Benefit and additional allowances.

(+) There will be a double family premium for each disabled child. (The Spastics Society campaigned against only one premium for all children in the family.)

(+) The capital limit for each person will be doubled to £6,000.

(+) Disabled people will be able to earn £15 (up from £4) before their Income Support is affected.

(–) Work-related expenses, such as travel, can no longer be deducted.

Comment: A disguised cut in benefit.

(–) A new disability premium will replace additional allowances (including 10 for severe disability).

Comment: According to figures in the White Paper, the disabled person’s premium will be £12.25. But a severely disabled, housebound, incontinent

Continued on page 12



**Flowers and hope for Shelley.** A little give and take between HRH The Duchess of Kent and Shelley Kent, a pupil at Beech Tree School (North), watched by head teacher, Nina Story. The Duchess was opening the first purpose-built school for multiply-disabled children who have severe behavioural problems and might otherwise be in long-stay hospitals. See page 5.

Ann Hills

## Radical bill gives disabled people the right to dictate their own lives



Tom Clarke

A parliamentary bill designed to give disabled people a stronger hand in decisions which effect their lives was launched last month. It has the support of The Spastics Society and other major voluntary organisations.

The Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Bill has been put forward by Tom Clarke, Labour MP for Monklands West in Scotland.

Dubbed “Clarke’s Charter for human rights for disabled people” by Jack Ashley MP, one of its sponsors, the wide-ranging bill covers assessment procedures by local authorities, the making of statements, discharging disabled people from hospitals into the community, assistance for carers and access.

Most significantly, the bill seeks to ensure the right of disabled people (and this applies to mentally handicapped people especially) to have a representative present at all assessments and examinations of their needs.

It would also improve on present assessment procedures by introducing a co-ordinated assessment by local authorities taking into account the variety of needs of individual disabled people. Disabled people and their representatives would have access to statements.

“I hope to establish a framework which will encour-

age our society to accept that people with disabilities have rights and that they should not continually be ‘done unto’,” said Tom Clarke.

The bill identifies 3 priority groups for assessment: disabled people being cared for by ageing parents, post-19 school leavers with special needs, and disabled people moving from long-stay hospital into the community.

It seeks to make local education authorities inform social services of the school leaving dates of disabled young people so that provision can be made for assessments.

The bill calls upon the Secretary of State for Social Services to carry out an annual review of community care plans in relation to the number of adults and children still living in long-

Continued on page 12

## Home Office re-thinks cinema access

Under pressure from the Commons All Party Disablement Group, the Royal National Institute for the Blind and other disability organisations, the Home Office has revised its draft guidelines on cinema access for licensing authorities and cinema managers.

Unaccompanied blind people and guide dogs will not be banned from going to the cinema. Nor will people in wheelchairs, so long as their wheelchairs do not obstruct the exit routes.

The about-turn was revealed in answer to a Parliamentary question from John Hannam, secretary of the Commons All Party Disablement Group, on 5 December.

New, more positive, draft guidelines have now been circulated for comment.

The emphasis is on continuing to improve facilities for disabled people, supplying information, and consulting with representatives of disabled people before any restriction is considered.

“We are pleased that the Home Office has moved to make the original guidelines better”, says Hugh Lawrence of the RNIB. “We are now looking at the revised guidelines.”

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# Letters to the Editor

Disability Now 12 Park Crescent London W1N 4EQ

## The voice

The Alpha Advisory Committee aims to provide people with cerebral palsy with a voice in all matters that concern them in The Spastics Society.

One of the problems of acting as a voice is that we must obtain a full range of opinions, ideas and questions in order to genuinely reflect the views of people with cp.

As I said at the AGM, if there is anybody who has an issue that they would like to have brought to people's attention; or if anyone is interested in taking part in local Alpha activities, groups or committees; or if you would just like some information on what Alpha is about, please contact me.

**John R Per**  
Vice-Chairman  
Alpha Advisory Committee  
82 Oban Street  
Poplar  
London E14

## Sexual integration for physically disabled people

I was most interested in the Viewpoint article by Jim Woods (*Disability Now*, November).

I am not qualified to comment generally since I have never been obliged to live in an "institution" of any kind, but my views on Jim's fourth point - sex - may be helpful.

Sex is taken for granted by every able-bodied person. If such a person wants a partner "for the night" he/she can always prop up a bar until a suitable candidate appears. Men with money to spare can also visit places like Soho in London.

For physical reasons alone, these options are barred to all but a very few physically handicapped people - other solutions

must be found.

First we must look at our attitude towards sex and towards those who earn their living by providing it.

We must appreciate and accept that a wedding ring is *not* a legal requirement for a woman before she can take part, any more than it is for a man.

Prostitution in itself is legal, despite what some people may think; I cannot myself see why the earnings from that profession are regarded as immoral since the proceeds of a legal occupation must themselves be legal.

How, then, can the physically handicapped, particularly those obliged to be in some degree dependent on others in residential centres, be integrated with the rest of society in this respect?

We must bury our old Victorian double-standards and treat prostitutes with the same respect as we do the practitioners of any other legal profession. This will go a long way towards satisfying the needs of male residents.

I assume staff are aware of which residents are in need of such a service, and also know where practitioners operate in their area.

How many "care staff" have over the years wished they could summon the courage to take a resident to a prostitute? What is wrong with actually doing so?

Given the will, I am sure that a way will be easily found to bring client and practitioner together.

Finally, it must be remembered that female residents have as much right as males to satisfy their sexual needs. This problem is obviously more difficult to solve, if only because women's rights in general are not treated as equal to those of men.

Being a man, I will not suggest a solution; perhaps a female reader will do so?

**David A P Nicholson**  
63 Sedlescombe Road  
London SW6 1RE

## Is she asking too much?

I look forward to every issue of *Disability Now* which gives me lots of inspiration. Especially, I like the column "Share Your Problems" because I think that is something disabled people need a lot.

In Sweden, cp is a low status handicap. I am impressed by the interest and respect you show in adult spastics. Fortunately enough, there are fewer and fewer new cases of cp, but we who were born before 1965 are still there.

I find the Sholley trolley a super walking aid because it folds flat and is possible to get up on a bus. With bigger wheels and some kind of brakes it would be even better.



The Sholley trolley.

I have got some more problems with my balance while getting older and I can't learn to walk with a stick. The walking aids that are available here are very big and clumsy. They don't allow the user to go on public transport, so you have to be able to drive a car, and I never was able to because of a slight problem. I am a strong and active person and I don't like to cost a lot of money by always going by the handicap taxi. People here think I am asking too much of a walking aid.

**Rosie Sihlblom**  
Valhallavagen 152 Bv  
S-11524 Stockholm  
Sweden

## Some thoughts on the AGM

I am a spastic over the age of 40, now in a wheelchair. At present I am not a member of any group for spastics. But I am on the committee of the Stonehouse Association and I am chairman of DIAL Northamptonshire (Corby branch).

I was not at the last AGM, but this one, I thought, was good and there was a warm welcome.

However, the speeches were too long. It is hard for a person to sit in a wheelchair - or any other type of chair - and be a good listener for 2½ hours. I had to leave after Mr Newton's speech.

Mr Sharpe is a very good humorist: his pace and delivery were fantastic. But I did not agree with his thoughts on educating the public to understand spastics.

Twenty-five years ago I was at a meeting of the Lanarkshire Spastics Association where they were talking about the role the

spastic should play in our community. One woman was saying we must educate the public to accept and understand spastics. I said, "No. We must educate the spastic to accept the public." You should have seen their faces and the pity in their eyes. Things haven't changed.

Mr Newton said one thing that is very true: it is up to us at the grassroots to try and say what we want and the only way we can do this is to get off our backsides and try.

The afternoon session could have been good but I was falling asleep by then so I had to go out after about 30 minutes.

I did try to say something about what the name of The Spastics Society means to me.

When people ask me what is wrong with me and I tell them I am a spastic, the tone of their voice seems to change and a look of pity appears as if they think you should have a slot in your head for money.

The word "spastic" evokes pity or charity, so we must change it.

The Spastics Society did a great job in the past or we would not have the organisation that we have today. For that we must always be very grateful. But that was in the past. Now we must start to think of a new name.

**William Hall**  
1 Lincoln Way  
Corby, Northants.

## Priced out

As a disabled person, I am amazed when I read through the pages of *Disability Now* and look at some of the advertisements for "aids for the disabled", to see some of the fancy prices demanded for these "aids". Either they are priced at, in some cases, hundreds of pounds or, in the case of what are expensive items, there is no price indicated.

Unless one is well-heeled then the adverts - and the politicians' promises and the other garbage we hear on TV programmes and in papers dealing with matters of disability - have no meaning and little or no consequence to anybody, least of all to the disabled.

I don't want something for nothing, just reasonably priced, that's all.

**James Henry Chell**  
33 Sea View Road  
Cliffsend  
Ramsgate  
Kent CT12 5EJ

## Fire hazard

In the early hours of a recent Saturday morning, my husband awoke in a state of discomfort - his foot was hot. On blearily opening his eyes to look at the bedside clock, he saw the bottom of the bed was in flames!

The problem was our electric overblanket. Despite the fact that my husband has 3 years of City and Guilds training as an electrician we chose to ignore both the manufacturer's warning about having the blanket serviced once a year and our own normally strict safety precautions with anything electric.

We were lucky: a young and healthy couple who were able to deal quickly with the situation. But what would a disabled or old person have done?

With winter upon us, please don't think this type of thing only happens to other people. Have your blanket serviced regularly. Don't rely on the fuse blowing - our's did and the bed was still on fire.

**Mary Stanton**  
89 Dagnall Park  
Selhurst  
London SE25

(sic)

A new diary column  
devised by Simon Crompton  
and Alan Durant

## Playboy

It might be hard to visualise, but the federally-funded National Library Service for the Blind publishes a braille edition of *Playboy* magazine. Such is its popularity that, when the United States Government recently announced it would stop funding the publication to cut costs, blind readers decided to sue. Sounds as if everyone's in for a bumpy ride.

## Inaccessible

A new self-advocacy organisation threw its doors open to the public at the King's Fund Centre in November, but had to warn people with disabilities that "the building is not accessible upstairs to people in wheelchairs as it is normally during the week" because all the lifts are turned off. The name of the organisation? - People First. Some people are still more first than others, it seems.

## Isms

In October Lambeth Town Hall announced its determination (to the tune of £14,500) to combat 2 new types of discrimination - heterosexism and ablebodyism. Original maybe, only, when asked, a councillor and 2 council spokespeople had no idea what ablebodyism meant.

Mr Simon M Hooberman, prospective Conservative candidate in Streatham, worked out what it meant, but his response in the *South London Press* is not likely to enhance his electoral appeal amongst disabled people. "Undoubtedly, it must mean discrimination against the disabled," he writes. "How ludicrous to suggest this exists, except in their own pathetic brains!" (He means the councillors, I hope). "It's only these people who incite, by their actions, the discrimination they claim to be fighting." He then suggests the Lambeth Labour group put themselves into a lunatic asylum. An enlightened and reasonable solution, no doubt, but surely contrary to Government policy?

## Racist

Sad to report that the Newham branch of Age Concern, in London, feels it cannot sell the Age Concern booklet *Your Rights* for pensioners, because the Union Jack on the front cover might be construed as racist.

## Powerless

Poor old Barclays Bank - powerless, it seems, to forge its own destiny in today's tough world of market forces. Answering a letter complaining about the inconvenient height of the new Barclaycard Pinpoint machines for disabled people, published in *In from the Cold* magazine, a Barclays Project Manager provided the following tear-jerking specimen: "We are sensitive to the ergonomic problem, but are currently constrained by the availability of equipment and the priority to establish wider services at reasonable cost. It is very rare for the Bank to be actively involved in the ergonomic design of vending terminals," he said, but "will endeavour to influence terminal design and positioning." Don't you just have to put them lower?

Contributions, please, to DN

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"Local people don't know how to react to me. I'm different".

Kate Bond is in a wheelchair. She lives on her own in a specially adapted bungalow near Oxford and relies heavily on the telephone for social contact. "I need to meet people", she said.

She came to the People Need People meeting to have a good day out with some friends from her local PHAB group, and to speak her mind. "I wanted to tell people who don't understand how disabled you are. I wanted to speak for myself."

Many of the 27 young people with disabilities and 9 helpers, who spent their Saturday at the Westminster Conference Centre on 30 November, had never before shared openly the difficulties they have meeting people and making personal relationships.

One or two had spoken to their parents, but for most it was an area that, as someone said, "gets brushed under the carpet".

### "I need to meet people."

International Youth Year seemed an appropriate time to air these concerns. Chris Davies of *Disability Now* had the inspiration for this first-ever meeting.

"We hope to explore relationships in families; relationships with people that you work with, or study with; relationships with your friends or your lovers - all sorts of relationships", said Mary Davies of SPOD, the acting chairperson.

To break the ice, she invited people to say hello to those around them. Then everyone watched part of *Tell Them I'm a Mermaid*, a video shown recently on Channel 4 in which American women with disabilities discuss the difficulties of making relationships and the joys of succeeding.

Harry Lowden, care adviser at the Leonard Cheshire Foundation, picked up the themes and expanded them.

"The women in the video can say very clearly and directly just how much they need people, 'body, heart and soul'", he said.

"All over the world, whether we are able-bodied or whether we've some sort of physical handicap, people are wondering,



Dean Mason talks to Mary Wilkinson.

# need PEOPLE PEOPLE

Understanding disability and personal relationships

## The day they spoke frankly

Mary Wilkinson reports "a first" for *Disability Now* and SPOD, supported by ASBAH, PHAB and Disability Alliance ERA



Neil Slatter (right, foreground) leads a group which includes Kate Bond (back, centre).

'How can we meet the special person?' 'How can I make new friends?' 'How can I find a soul-mate who can understand me and who I can understand, who will raise the quality of my life?'

He played a song from *HAIR*, "It's easy to be hard; it's easy to be cold".

He also talked of 3 people in Leonard Cheshire Homes who have desperate feelings of loneliness.

"It's easy for me to pass this off - you know - suggest all the other things: a good book, a good meal, a walk in the country, listen to a good record, etc. The real need can so often be

ignored. But our focus today says don't ignore it, look at it."

People then joined one of 4 groups led by a counsellor with a physical disability.

An hour-and-a-half later, there was a report-back session in which 4 main barriers to making relationships were offered by a representative of each group (see aggregate below).

The discussion centred round relationships between able-bodied and disabled people.

Shyness and embarrassment were 2 problems. "Able-bodied people need to understand more about what disability is so there isn't so much lack of com-

munication between the two groups," said Rosalind Gladstone from Bognor Regis.

"The way to change people's attitudes is to make them aware that there are no differences", said Neil Slatter, a group leader. "We have the same wants, needs and desires as anybody else. As long as we live in a society that segregates us from the day that we are born in education and environment, then I think these attitudes are going to continue. Because it's the unknown that segregates us."

Simon Nelson from the National Star Centre in Cheltenham talked of the difficulties

of starting a conversation and the importance of learning how to behave.

"We have got to show that we don't bite... We, as disabled people, have got to break down the barrier and show we are not all that disabled - and we're independent."

Failure, he said, affects disabled people more than able-bodied people because they have had to put up with it all their lives. "We've got to learn to cope and to realise that there's no embarrassment in asking someone, 'Can you peel this banana?'"

Sue Smith, a group leader, agreed that "failure" and "independence" were key words.

"You feel you have to reach a certain standard before you can be accepted," she said. "I think it comes down to a state of mind rather than having to be able to do everything. If you know what you want, that's independence."

After lunch, people returned to the same groups to discuss how to overcome the barriers (see below) and to work out, if they wanted to, their own plans of action.

At the report-back, Adrian Evans from Nash House, Bromley talked about having a good self-image. "If you look smart - you are clean, your hair is fresh - people will just look at you and they'll forget the wheelchair."

His group thought that disabled people should not be protected from being hurt and that they must take the initiative.

Adrian gave an example of his own. "Up until about 4 months ago I felt that I couldn't get out at all. So I wrote and complained to the local council about the awful height of the pavements. Could they lower them? They wrote back saying they could only do so at three main points. So I had to work out where I thought it would be most useful."

Others gave examples too.

### "We have got to show that we don't bite."

Rosalind Gladstone thought that sex education should include illustrations of people with disabilities to combat the assumption that sexuality is only for the physically perfect.

More coverage of disabled people in the media was an issue that excited a lot of discussion. Simon Nelson wanted more coverage of disabled sport too.

Chris Crosskey from the National Star Centre in Cheltenham, asked what could be done about unemployment. "In the last year about 80 students have left and only 1 got full-time employment", he said.

People were urged to take the initiative, write letters, make phone calls, nag. "We have to take it upon ourselves to be responsible for our own lives, to a greater or lesser degree," said Mary Davies.

One group was concerned about the segregation of disabled people and asked why able-bodied people had not been invited to People Need People. Future days, it was suggested, should be a 50:50.

"I would like more open, mixed conferences with different disabilities represented", Dean Mason from Nash House, had said earlier. "If able-bodied people came, we would really learn what they think of disabled people. It might also reveal that we have the same kind of problems."

He liked the day's emphasis on workshops. "If you cut speaking down, we get a chance to talk to each other. That's the problem with other conferences."

### What are the barriers to making relationships?

- 1 Segregation - in centres, schools, wheelchairs - so few opportunities to meet people or maintain home contacts
- 2 Shyness - starting a conversation
- 3 Other people's attitudes
- 4 Lack of education eg how to behave
- 5 Lack of privacy
- 6 Fear of failure
- 7 Not allowed to take risks in relationships

### How can those barriers be overcome?

- 1 Like yourself
- 2 Have a sense of humour
- 3 Meet people half-way
- 4 Counselling for parents, staff and people with disabilities
- 5 Freedom to be hurt
- 6 Sex education
- 7 More education about disabilities
- 8 More coverage of disabled people in the media
- 9 Take the initiative!



Over wine, the discussion continues. Harry Lowden, left, with Mary Nangle, centre, and David John, right.



Mary Davies, acting chairperson, talks to group leader Mike Long, over lunch.



There's no such thing as a free lunch - and *Disability Now* is no exception.

The newspaper costs The Spastics Society 40p a copy or £4.80 for a year's supply. At the moment it comes to you free.

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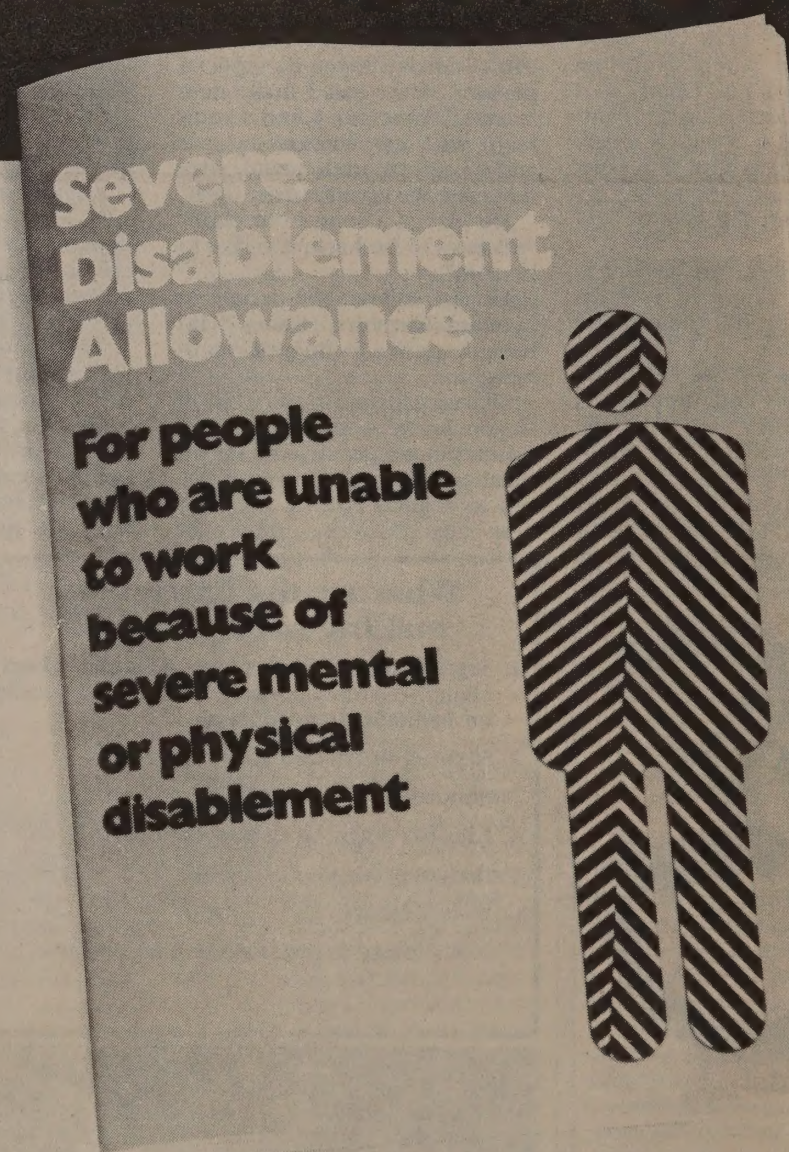
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DN2



## Duchess opens first purpose-built school for behaviourally-disturbed children

Friday the 13th, pouring rain and an outbreak of chickenpox did not deter HRH The Duchess of Kent, Patron of the Spastics Society, from going to Chorley, Lancashire last month. She was opening the first purpose-built school for multiply-disabled children who have severe behavioural problems.

Beech Tree School (North) has 14 children and a staff of 49 who operate a 24 hour service 52 weeks a year.

The Duchess talked enthusiastically with many of the staff. "She seemed very interested in the different behaviours, why the children behaved that way and what we were doing about it," said head teacher, Nina Story, who showed the Duchess round the new building.

The Duchess met some of the children and watched others through one-way screens.

She saw them taking part in practical programmes. For example, Diane (20) was making spaghetti bolognese in the kitchen and Lee (11) was dressing himself. She gave Andrew (9) a token for the sweet dispenser as a reward for toilet training.

Then, already behind schedule, she planted a beech tree, and joined other visitors in the marquee.

Many local dignitaries were presented to her by the Society's chairman, Mrs Joyce Smith, including Councillor Geof Simons, chairman of the school's fundraising committee, as well as representatives from local groups, parents and fund-raisers.

Finally, everyone came out to see her receive the keys of a mini-bus presented by the Film

and Television Lighting Contractors Association which she passed over to Nina Story.

Beech Tree School (North) cost about £570,000. The Government has contributed £250,000 under its pound-for-pound scheme and so far over £112,000 has been raised and more is promised. Blue Peter has given £175,000.

Biddy Baxter, editor of Blue Peter, was at the opening. The Duchess took the opportunity of asking her if she would become a vice-president of The Spastics Society, and Biddy Baxter happily accepted.

Beech Tree School (North) is

the Society's second school for behaviourally-disturbed children. Eight years ago Beech Tree School (South) was opened near Cambridge.

The need for such schools is acute.

"We have a very long waiting list and we know that there are many children who need Beech Tree who would otherwise be living or destined to live in long stay hospitals", said Nina Story.

"By coming to Beech Tree, they have a chance of returning to the community. Within 2 years we hope they will move on to special schools, colleges or hostels."

John Hughes



The Duchess, accompanied by Mrs Joyce Smith, asks Biddy Baxter of Blue Peter (right) to be a vice-president.

fostering or adopting a handicapped child, he heard nothing for 2 years. Later, he discovered that 30 miles away the same local authority had been advertising a child for 18 months.

He found out about the child he is now fostering and hoping to adopt from reading an advertisement in a British newspaper while he was abroad on holiday. The same local authority was dealing with his request, but there was complete lack of liaison.

Mr Thurnham also asked the Government to estimate the cost of a national standard minimum adoption allowance which would help parents with the extra costs involved in the care of children with special needs.

Noting that it can cost up to £20,000 a year to keep a severely handicapped child in institutional care, Mr Thurnham called the £10.5 million currently allocated for transferring children to the community "a paltry sum".

Many local authorities say they cannot afford even a £2,000 fee to sponsor a child for the "Be My Parent" scheme run by the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF).

Replying for the Government, Ray Whitney, Under Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, paid tribute to the work done by Exodus and BAAF.

He thought there had been adequate funds for transferring children from long-stay hospitals and that the number still there had fallen dramatically.

He said that care must be taken to ensure that all placements were suitable.

Noting Mr Thurnham's suggestion for an adoption allowance, Mr Whitney said that the National Children's Bureau is currently doing research into the present adoption allowance

scheme.

The Bureau is due to report in 1989.

It takes time, he said, to identify the costs and benefits of any new scheme, but he believed that this was the right way to proceed.

### European directive on parental leave is defeated

On 26 November, the Commons debated a motion on a European Community directive about parental leave and leave from work for family reasons.

Both forms of leave would give men and women the right to a minimum of 3 months parental leave during the first 2 years of a child's life and a minimum number of days leave per year for pressing family reasons.

The directive seeks to establish the same entitlement for all member states.

In the Commons the motion was defeated, and no agreement could be reached on the proposal when it went to the European Council on 5 December.

### Board and lodging rules were illegal

Norman Fowler's original board and lodging regulations have been declared illegal.

This was the unanimous decision of the Court of Appeal on 13 December.

It means that thousands of young, unemployed claimants have been illegally evicted from board and lodging accommodation, and thousands of others are now entitled to rebates.

(The ruling does not affect claims made after 25 November

## BICE '86 - are you going too?

Simon Crompton



Dave Williams (left) and Rick Delvin are off again.

Dave Williams and Rick Delvin, leaders of the disabled cyclists' expedition from London to Warsaw last summer, are hatching another trip.

This time it will be nearer home, but just as strenuous.

They plan to lead a group of disabled cyclists on a tour round the British Isles and the Irish Republic, starting in London on 26 August and arriving back 5 weeks later.

The British and Ireland Cycle Expedition - BICE '86 - will take in Cardiff, Pembroke, Rosslare, Dublin, Belfast, Stranraer, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Leeds, Manchester and Milton Keynes.

"We are looking for 10 disabled cyclists representing the Irish Republic as well as the British Isles," said Rick Delvin. "And we hope other disabled cyclists will join us along the way for shorter distances."

"We can promise them 'blood, sweat and tears' and a great feeling of achievement."

"We're not racing cyclists," he added. "There will be time to look around and get a feeling for the country."

The aim of the expedition is also to raise at least £40,000 to help Cerebral Palsy Overseas set up mobile clinics in Turkey and Portugal.

Instead of each cyclist seeking sponsorship, there will be a com-

which are covered by new regulations.)

The ruling could have an impact on the freeze on charges in private homes for elderly people and people with disabilities which were imposed under the regulations.

A decision is expected this month when the result of a test case is known.

### HOUSE OF LORDS

### Care given by families is taken for granted

The needs of mentally ill and mentally handicapped people with special reference to community care were debated in the Lords on 4 December.

Lord Mottistone (Conservative) opened the debate by saying that there was widespread concern that proper care for all these patients should continue to be available at all times, but opinions differed about how best to achieve this.

He urged the Government to provide care in the community before reducing the number of hospital beds. Complementary action was not enough; he wanted reassurance that the Government truly understood the need for advanced preparation for community care.

Speaking of carers, he said that

petition to guess how many miles the expedition travels. One guess will cost 50p and 3 guesses, £1. It will start in March and last throughout the year. Prizes will probably be a holiday for 2, a car and a bike.

Coupons will be available from branches of the National Federation of Women's Institutes which is also helping with meals and accommodation; from the National Federation of 18+ Groups, which arranges social and cultural activities for young people, and from CPO.

"We want lots of cyclists selling coupons too," said Dave. "If you can trike or bike and want a challenge, please get in touch with us".

*Cerebral Palsy Overseas, 6 Duke's Mews, London W1M 5RB. Tel: 01-486 6996*

● As a result of the London-Warsaw expedition, the Polish cerebral palsy society is arranging cycling trips round Poland this summer for cp children. In Czechoslovakia, cyclists with disabilities are being encouraged and the regulations against riding tricycles on the road are likely to be relaxed.

"It's all happening in the Eastern bloc," said Rick Delvin. "I think they are prepared to learn."

the care given by families to mentally ill and handicapped people is taken for granted all too readily.

This point was picked up by Lord Ennals (Labour). The financial burden of caring for people with disabilities often falls on the family, he said. If 1 per cent of those caring for an elderly relative gave up, the health and social service budget would have to increase overnight by 20 per cent.

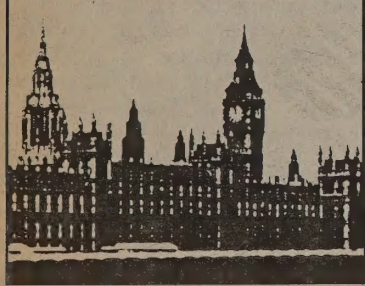
Families, particularly women, are the basis of care in the community, he pointed out, and carers save the state an enormous amount of money. Yet the Invalid Care Allowance - the only benefit available for carers - is not payable to a married woman no matter what her relationship to the disabled dependent. It is time, he said, to put an end to this injustice.

Speaking for the Government, Baroness Trumpington, Under Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, said no package for community care is appropriate in all circumstances.

"If we are moving individuals out of hospital," she said, "it must be to appropriate alternative facilities that already exist. She confirmed that for those who still need to be in hospital, sufficient hospital care would remain. "We want services to fit people, not services that fit only theories," she said.

Sharron Saint Michael

## MONTH IN PARLIAMENT



### HOUSE OF COMMONS

### £10.5 million allocated by Government to transfer children to community is "paltry" says Tory MP

Introducing an adjournment debate on 25 November, Conservative MP Peter Thurnham called for further funding and more centrally co-ordinated services for handicapped children needing placement in families.

He argued that this would speed up the transfer of children from long-stay hospitals into the community, on principles which the Government supports.

He said that more people are considering fostering or adopting children with special needs, but that the attitude of social workers towards adoption is often too negative.

As a foster parent of a handicapped child he could speak from experience.

After telling the local authority that he was interested in



# Holidays Holidays Holidays Holidays Holidays



Stephen and Linda in the Casas Heddy swimming pool. But there was a cold shower afterwards!

## Canary Islands: the good life

I look forward all the long winter to my holiday and study the brochure from cover to cover. I love the sunshine so it has to be somewhere hot.

This year I went with my mother to Lanzarote in the Canary Islands, to Casas Heddy, a holiday centre run by the Oslo Red Cross.

Our fellow guests were Norwegian, Spanish and English and we could understand everybody.

There was a lovely bathing pool and I went in most days. I was wheeled in a special chair and taken round by the English nurse, Linda, who was very good to me.

I had to go under a cold shower after, and when I came out it was awful, freezing. Still, I could lie on the sunbed and get warm and brown.

We were taken over the island in a special minibus. We went up to the top of the volcano which is still very hot and if you throw water into a "chimney" it sends steam high into the air.

There were camels. I didn't go on one, but Mum and Linda did. I think camels have a very supercilious look and make rude noises and smell.

There were lots of little lizards

which would come out and eat biscuits which we put down for them. There were also mosquitos. They didn't worry me much, but they did some of the others.

Sometimes we sang songs around the piano after dinner. One Norwegian recorded a lot of the songs. I think he was a radio producer. Some of the words were a little rude so I hope they don't understand everything!

We had a wheelchair Conga round the terrace at midnight and finished doing the Hokey Cokey and singing Auld Lang Syne. It was great.

We kissed each other goodbye as lots of us were going home next day.

Lanzarote is very different from most holiday places. The people have had to work hard to get the land to grow food after the volcano erupted. They are nice people and the villages are lovely and clean.

Stephen Tomlin

Stephen Tomlin went to Casas Heddy with Threshold Travel. In 1986 a 1 week's stay, flying from Gatwick, costs £345. For details of other departures and further information contact Threshold Travel, see page 8.

## USA: Ten days of the American dream

Bill Hargreaves reports on his whistle-stop tour

An invitation to visit the United States of America, coast to coast, taking in Washington, Baltimore, Kansas City, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Who could refuse?

The invitation came from Dr Harold Snider who is himself blind, and executive director of SATH - the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped. The trip was sponsored by the United States Government Department of Travel, Tourism and Commerce and by World Airways.

Our party consisted of journalists and communicators with various disabilities including deafness and blindness. 3 representatives from West Germany flew separately.

We travelled in a World Airways DC10 from Gatwick, along with other people in wheelchairs who were ordinary tourists.

World Airways is foremost in providing facilities for disabled passengers. They even have special officers at their booking offices to deal with facilities or special requests from disabled passengers. They have learnt that this attracts a large number of clients. Surprise, surprise, disabled people have friends!

After a long and rather tedious flight we arrived at Baltimore Washington Airport. Fortunately we were given the evening off so as to be ready for a "VIP" tour of the White House at 8am the next morning.

VIP? Well, we certainly went where visitors don't normally go. Up the ramps at the visitors' entrance; through the sort of security check you go through at airports; but then - because I had taken to a wheelchair by this time - we were rushed by an armed security guard up a steep ramp and into the kitchens of the White House!

There Mary, my wife, took over. A quick "hello" to the chef

and we were into a very smooth lift being whisked to the first floor.

What a sight met our eyes. To our left, the beautiful Jacqueline Kennedy Gardens; to our right, photographs and artefacts showing the history of the White House. We went through all the state rooms, and saw the dining room which seats 145 guests.

At the Capitol Building on Capitol Hill, the guides made sure that people in wheelchairs could see as much as possible of what they were describing.

We saw the gold-plated page of Magna Carta upon which the American Constitution was founded. Above us was the tremendous cast-iron dome and around the walls statues of the famous men of American history.

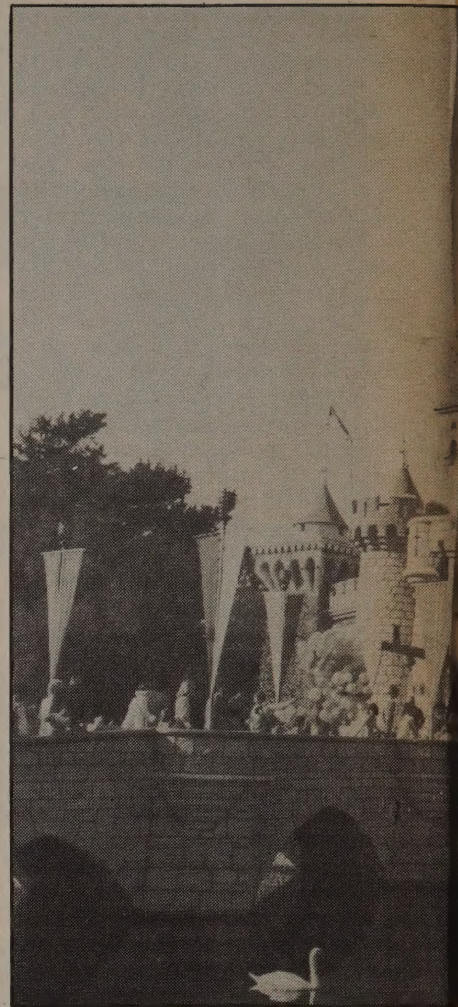
We went in a lift to the visitors' gallery of the House of Representatives. It was just as I had imagined: the Stars and Stripes, the national flag, was proudly displayed behind Mr Speaker's chair. And the House itself is divided just like our House of Commons, with the Government on one side and the opposition on the other.

## Off into space

At the Space Museum, wheelchairs were at the ready. We saw a marvellous film which took us on a voyage into outer space. The screen was 50ft high and 100ft wide, with sound to match. I really felt I was in the space shuttle.

My own particular joy was going to see the aeroplane, "The Spirit of St Louis" in which Charles Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic for the first time. There it was, so small, so insignificant, and so famous.

We also saw the Arlington cemetery and the John F Kennedy memorial, beautiful in its simplicity.



Sleeping Beauty Castle, the entrance to

Everywhere we visited in Washington was accessible - if you could get there. We travelled in luxurious limousines. But there are no vehicles specially adapted for the disabled traveller - so I was told. You could try a Yellow Cab.

In Baltimore, 2½ hours away, we walked through the Pavilion, a wonderful collection of shops and restaurants, and ate "crab imperial" at the Philips Harbour Place Restaurant.

Next day we were on top of the world at the 27th floor observation deck of the museum of the World Trade Centre. There we had a 5-sided view of Baltimore and the harbour area which has been re-developed into a successful tourist attrac-

Bill

## Europe: wheelchairs under canvas

Last May, 7 of us - Ian Root my fiancé, Jean Preston and myself in wheelchairs, with 3 staff from Wakes Hall and Yoko, a Japanese student, set off in a minibus for a trip around Europe.

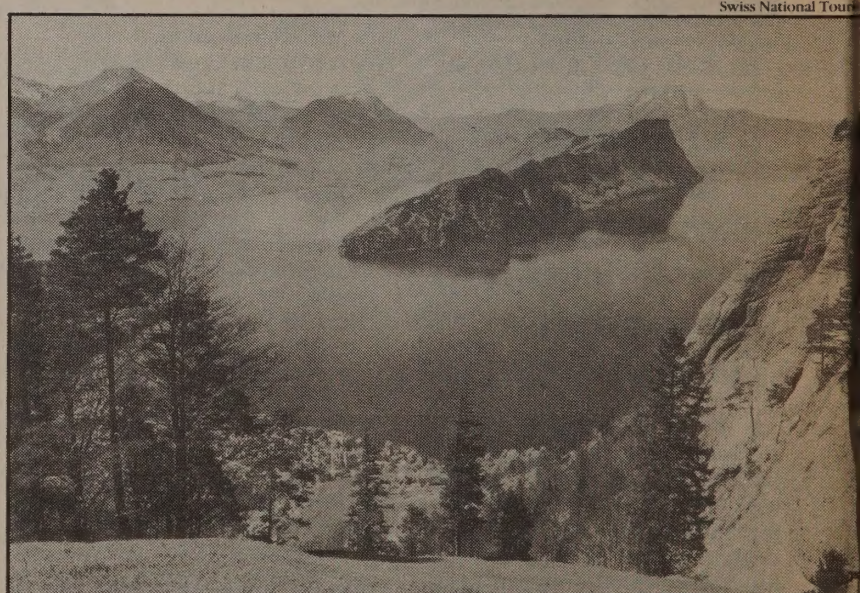
We had no set route and were willing to go where our noses took us. But we were to wind up at my grandmother's house in the South of France in two week's time.

The first night we spent at a centre for disabled people near Paris. They were expecting us, which was nice after crossing on the ferry and a day of solid driving.

Wheelchairs are not commonplace in France. Facilities are not very obvious either, and people stared all the time.

## Totally ignored

In Strasbourg Cathedral, which we visited on our way to Germany, a man actually tried to push some money into my hand. I couldn't believe it. We were totally ignored at a cafe and sat for 40 minutes without anyone



What the campers saw: Vitznau and Lake Lucerne.

coming near us.

We didn't think a lot of Germany so we pressed on to Switzerland, crossing the border at Basle. We all noticed the difference: road signs were so clear and everything so clean. There seemed to be disabled badges everywhere.

We had brought a two-man tent with us just as an emergency measure. However, as the day went on, it became clear that accommodation was very expensive. As it happened, there

was a beautiful campsite at Vitznau overlooking the Lake of Lucerne. The weather was fine so we thought that the tent wouldn't be so bad.

David, Val, Yoko and Libby started to erect the tent and really they didn't look as if any of them knew where to put what.

To our amazement, we were

Down below the leaning tower of Pisa in Italy: Ian Root, Jean Preston and Christiane Redon with care staff from Wakes Hall.

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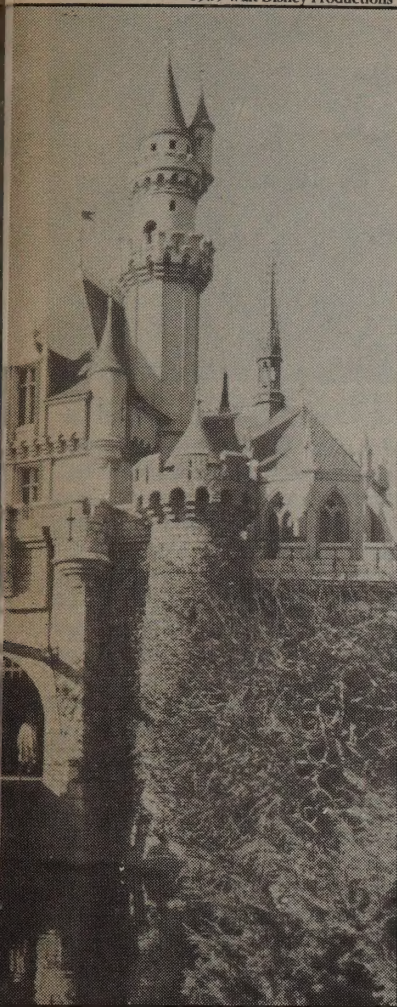
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Wrendal House, 2 Whitworth Street West, Manchester. M1 5WX



# Holidays Holidays Holidays Holidays Holidays

1985 Walt Disney Productions



land. (There is to be one in Paris).

tion. We were told that councillors from Liverpool and Birmingham had visited Baltimore for ideas on how to refurbish their own down-town areas.

After a quick tour of the Baltimore convention centre, we arrived at the national aquarium. Not only is it the largest of its kind, but the most up-to-date for disabled people. If you are blind you can even handle live lobsters and crabs!

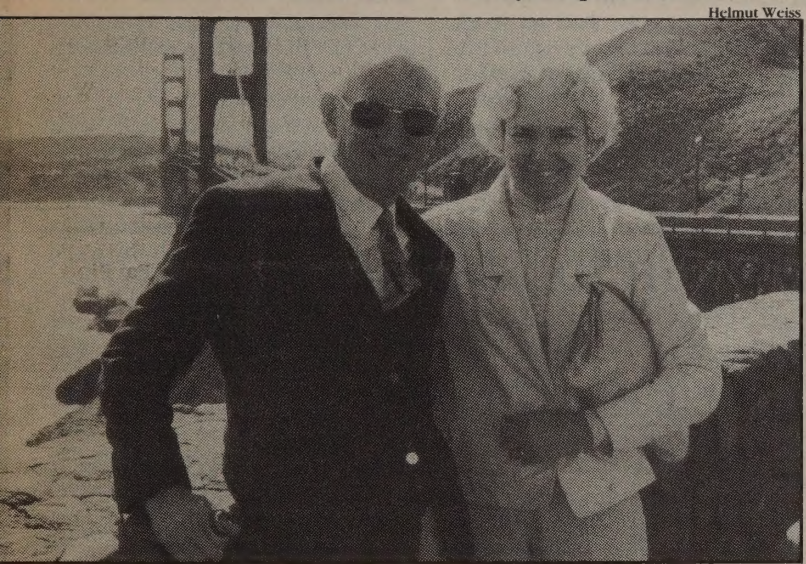
Kansas City, our next stop, was quite different, at least from my pre-conceived ideas. I had expected buffalo. We did eat steak.

In the town of Independence we looked over the Harry S Truman museum. We saw his bullet-proof limousine and, much to my interest, a page from his diary - hand-written - in which he recorded that the next day he would have to tell Winston Churchill and Stalin that America was going to drop the first atom bomb on Hiroshima.

From Kansas we flew west, over the Rockies to San Francisco. We stayed very comfortably at a hotel near Oakland airport across the bay from San Francisco.

Tired? Of course we were, but we were not going to miss seeing San Francisco at night. Who could forget the giant illuminated sky-scrappers?

Helmut Weiss



Mary Hargreaves take a break beside the Golden Gate Bridge.

sitting outside the tent with the kettle on our one little camping gas within half-an-hour! I don't think I laughed so much for so long before.

We were all in very good spirits and sat outside the tent all evening eating and drinking until dark, watching the cable cars going up and down the mountains behind us and the boats on the lake in front of us. The beautiful scenery took our breath away. There were even cows with bells around their necks jingling in the distance.

## A new experience

Then it came to bedtime. Only Val and Libby had ever camped before, so it was a new experience for most of us.

David Driver



The other campers couldn't believe it when they realised that 7 of us were going to sleep in the tent. There was enough room for us all if we didn't move too much, but only a ground sheet for 2!

However, we all slept incredibly well and woke to brilliant sunshine.

We could now see the tops of the snow-capped mountains.

We were so impressed with the campsite and its facilities - washing machines, showers, toilets, quite luxurious shops, that we stayed in the area exploring for 3 days before moving on to Italy, and then back to France.

We all agreed that this holiday would take a lot of beating. I would recommend it to anyone with a sense of adventure who is not too severely physically handicapped and who doesn't mind cold water and sleeping rough.

I did things on this holiday that I never dreamed I would do, and had a lot of laughs in the process.

Christiane Redon

The trip cost about £500 each, including petrol.

The centre near Paris is: La Gentilhommiere, 20 Rue Schumberger, Marnes la Coquette, tel: 010 33 741 09 75 (Mon-sieur Bonnet).

Next day we toured the city. We had flown over the Golden Gate Bridge; now we drove over it, stood alongside it, and even sailed underneath it in a steam boat.

The famous Cannery has fishing boats, open-air fish markets, sidewalk stalls, restaurants and museums. Have you ever tasted sea food caught that day - or chosen from 30 ice creams?

We saw cable-cars and even Alcatraz prison - from 3 yards away.

But time was not on our side and our next appointment was an aircraft hangar in Oakland, to see 3 DC10s belonging to World Airways being serviced and checked.

Then on to Los Angeles and Hollywood.

We drove down the famous boulevards looking at shopping precincts where only the very rich can afford to shop. We had our first Mexican meal.

## It's fairyland

Last stop was Disneyland - a fairy-land for children of all ages, from 2 to 92. I would dare anyone to go there and be dissatisfied.

Our only dissatisfaction was there was not time to do it justice, or anywhere else, for that matter.

If you want the holiday of a lifetime, then America must surely be the place.

Each State, like our local authorities, has different laws and conditions, but generally speaking accessibility is good and the needs of disabled travellers are well catered for.

I was told that all hotels, however modest in price, must have basic facilities for disabled people. And every "rest room" (cloakroom) has toilets modified for the average wheelchair-user.

We arrived home jet-lagged, but happy. For 10 days we had been part of the American dream.

World Airways Inc, Reservations, Gatwick Airport, Horley, West Sussex. Tel: (0293) 518866

## England: Great Yarmouth

Last July I spent a very enjoyable 2-week holiday in Great Yarmouth. I went with my father who is 92 and loves to go back to his home town.

In fact we both know the town well since we often spend our holidays there. We always stay at the same hotel, the Marine View, which has a very friendly staff and is accessible for disabled people.

I was able to push my father in a wheelchair along the sea front, which is over 3 miles long, as it is so flat.

We had a pub lunch every mid-day and a rest when we felt we needed it.

Great Yarmouth is a very old town, with plenty to see and a harbour of interest. There's boating for the children, long golden sands, and a fun fair - although we are too old for the fun fair!

Brian Fransham

Marine View Hotel, Marine Drive, Great Yarmouth, tel: (0493) 842879

East Anglian Tourist Board, 14 Museum Street, Ipswich IP1 1HU. Tel: (0473) 214211 (who issue an information sheet Information for Physically Disabled Visitors to East Anglia).



Bob Taylor

Margaret Boatman (left) with others from the St Albans Spastics Society on board the Chesham UNA Narrowboat, New World.

## England: Dreaming along the Grand Union Canal

Last July, a group of us from the St Albans Spastics Society went for an outing on the Grand Union Canal. We travelled from Marsworth to the Junction Arms Public House in Tring where we had our picnic lunches, and then a little further before turning back.

Our boat, the New World, was specially adapted for up to 12 wheelchairs. It has an hydraulic lift for getting you on and off, and the lavatory is accessible.

You can make the journey without transferring from your wheelchair, but most people sat on the chairs or one of the two couches. I was grateful for the couch and raised up on two cushions I had a good view. Some people sat outside. There was a tape-recorder to play music, and I recommend that you take some easy-listening tapes to add to the relaxing atmosphere.

Other travellers on the canal

were very friendly and we were never short of a wave or a hello. The very dedicated fishermen were the least communicative!

Our journey took us past a bird aviary, as well as navigating 7 locks. There was plenty of interest there, for dates were written on the lock-gates, the bank or the walls. People shouted them out and I noted them down. 1853 was the earliest.

Sometimes we bumped another boat or the wall, which woke us from our dreams.

It was a long day. But don't be put off; the couches are restful and so is the river. It was one of the best days out I have ever had.

Margaret Boatman

Chesham UNA Narrowboat Ltd, 38 Brays Meadow, Hyde Heath, Amersham, Bucks, tel: (0494) 771792 (evenings only). £45 for the day, or can be hired by the week. A non-profit making company run by volunteers.



Robert Soper steers the boat.

## England: Crewing on the Soren Larsen

My parents took me up to Birkenhead last July to go aboard the Soren Larsen for 6 days sailing. The crew included able-bodied and disabled people.

We were told where we would be sleeping and which watches we were on.

Port and Starboard watches switch daily so that everybody has a go at everything.

Cleaning the deck and the brasswork on deck and cleaning the floors and heads (toilets) was something that had to be done every morning; this was known

as "happy hour".

Mess duty included preparing the meals, laying the table, serving and washing up (or drying up in my case). This came round every 3 or 4 days.

A watch was 4 hours in which time we were sailing the ship - working the sails and steering. An anchor watch lasted 2 hours usually at night or early in the morning when you made sure the navigation lights stayed on and the ship wasn't drifting too much.

On the first day, we motored out of Birkenhead with the help of a pilot boat, and sailed down the coast to anchor off Anglesea.

We spent two days in Belfast, then sailed to the Isle of Man and from there down the coast of Scotland and Northern England back to the River Mersey.

I was sitting in the helmsman's chair when we docked. Some members of the crew were going up the mast in a bo'sun's chair and someone asked if I wanted to go up. So I walked down the after-deck, slipped and cut my head on a metal bollard!

I still went up the mast though. But my head had to be stitched up by the nurse.

The voyage was a memorable experience despite some heavy weather, and I am grateful to the Society for sponsoring me.

Robert Soper

Jubilee Sailing Trust, Atlantic Road, Eastern Docks, Southampton. Tel: (0703) 31388



# Holidays Holidays



Oberstorf - scene of cries and bumps in the night.

Many students take a month's tour of Europe in the summer, camping and using the Inter-Rail Card which allows travel on all the European railways.

We wanted to do something similar.

Camping we felt we could cope with. We are both ambulant and fairly robust, with enough co-ordination to hammer in tent pegs. But it would have been impossible for us to

do all the walking and travelling on public transport especially with camping equipment. So we substituted an automatic Ford Escort for Inter-Rail and extended our stay to 6 weeks to take account of the extra travelling time.

It was a challenge. This was only our second holiday on our own, travelling large distances, never having camped beyond a practice run at putting up the

## Europe: Adventures on the grand tour

tent, and wondering how well we would be able to communicate in a foreign language when we often had trouble using our own.

We spent many days just wandering around towns, in the countryside of the Rhine valley and the Dordogne, or relaxing in the sun in the South of France or in the Austrian Alps. But on the whole we stuck to our plan - Dunkirk, Belgium, down along the Mosel and Rhine valleys to southern Germany and Austria, then backtracking a little to go through Switzerland and finally into France.

We clocked up just under 4,000 miles over the 6 weeks.

We put in some gruelling days of driving, though with both of us only needing a steering ball on the steering wheel we were able to share the driving, so it was never too exhausting.

While we could afford a few nights in hotels, most were spent under canvas at camp sites.

Camping was a cinch - once you had the tent up. At the best of times we got the tent up in around half-an-hour, though even this was pretty frustrating when you saw someone put up a similar tent in less than half that time.

Our biggest adventure was in a small hotel in Oberstorf, southern Germany.

Both nights were punctuated by what sounded like fierce family rows and the cries of a baby which we never saw. On our first morning we found the toilet smashed, looking as if someone had taken a hammer to it. We

began to wonder what dark secrets might be lurking in the hotel, and breathed a sight of relief as we slammed the car doors and drove away.

One of the funniest moments was in a French restaurant. Julie's meal had been served with a side plate of chips. My meal had been delayed. A man sitting next to me assumed that the chips were for me and I was unable to feed myself, so he picked up my fork and tried to feed me.

Communication in fact proved no great problem, maybe because we are so used to having difficulties.

In Germany and Austria, unaccompanied spastics seemed a novelty. We would walk into a bar and just about every head would turn to stare. One old lady in a German street thought us such a sight she offered us money for a drink. Parents stared as hard as their children.

All this changed dramatically when we entered Switzerland where we received hardly a second glance, and in France there was little difference to the attitude here.

The holiday was hard in many respects, but we were able to enjoy the pleasures that everyone enjoys travelling abroad, and perhaps enjoy them that little bit more because we had to work that little bit harder.

Michael Taylor  
Julie Smith

The total cost of the trip was about £830, plus the price of the camping equipment.



## The Holy Land

Last year Mike Boutwell and I, from Grangewood Centre, Kelvedon, went on a 14-day tour of the Holy Land with Fellowship Tours of Somerset.

The holiday was very successful. Our hotels were fine with plenty of room for wheelchairs. The food was good and not too expensive. And the people on our trip were very nice to us and often helped us along. We made some good friends whom we still write to.

We went all over the Holy Land and saw everything we had wanted to see - the Mount of Olives, Bethlehem, the Garden of Gethsemane, Jerusalem, the desert and the Dead Sea, Jericho, Nazareth, Cana, and Haifa.

It was beautiful at the Dead Sea where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found.

I should like to return one day.  
David Stevens

Fellowship Tours, South Chard, Somerset TA20 2PR. Tel: (0460) 20540. A 15-day tour beginning on 20 March costs £599 half-board.

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## Holiday information for disabled people

Kathy Johnson selects agents and organisations.

(Always check that your needs can be met.)



All too familiar?

### Specialist companies

**Carefree Holidays**, 64 Florence Road, Northampton NN1 4NA. Tel: (0604) 34301. All holidays (at home or abroad) start from Northampton, but can pick up people from further afield. Most holidays have voluntary helpers accompanying the group.

**Chalfont Line**, Holidays Administration, c/o Kings Arms Service Station, Rickmansworth Road, Harefield, Middx. Tel: (089582) 4860. Operates group holidays at home and abroad for disabled people, their families and friends.

**Mar Y Sol** in Tenerife is a new, purpose-built holiday centre for disabled people. Facilities include pools, gym, therapy rooms and shopping centre. There are 227 units offered on a time-share or full ownership basis and also hotel accommodation. Contact Maria La Faci, "Casa Angelica", Traseria Vintersol, Los Cristianos, Tenerife, Spain.

**Threshold Travel**, Wrendal House, 2 Whitworth Street West, Manchester M1 5WX. Tel: 061-236 9763. Offers holidays world wide for individuals and groups travelling in the company of able-bodied companions.

### Voluntary Organisations

**Colwall Court**, Pages Avenue, Bexhill-on-Sea, E Sussex. Tel: (0424) 211491. A hotel run by the Stars Organisation for Spastics which accommodates 18 children (adults in the off-peak season).

**John Grooms Association for the Disabled**, 10 Gloucester Drive, Finsbury Park, London N4 2LP. Tel: 01-802 7272. Offers various types of accommodation throughout Britain.

**Phab** (Physically Handicapped and Able-Bodied), Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HJ. Tel: 01-388 1963. Organises holidays at home and abroad.

**The Spastics Society's Churchtown Farm Field Studies Centre**, Lanlivery, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: (0208) 872148. Runs short courses in natural studies, adventure pursuits and leisure activities, such as photography and sailing. Open to children and adults with any disability.

**Project Phoenix Travel Trust**, 68 Rochfords, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5DJ. Offers study and special interest holidays. All visits are accompanied by able-bodied helpers.

**Tadworth Court Holiday Unit**, Sister Stephanie Fizio, Tadworth, Surrey KT20 5RU. Tel: (07373) 57171. Operates a summer holiday scheme for mentally and physically handicapped children (4-16 year-olds) and a fortnight for over 16 year-olds. One-to-one ratio of staff to children.

**Winged Fellowship Trust Holidays Abroad**, Angel House, Pentonville Road, London N1 9XD. Tel: 01-833 2594. Provides 2-week holidays for severely physically disabled people and

caters for particular interest and age groups. Helpers provided.

### Mainstream companies

An increasing number of companies are taking into account the needs of disabled holidaymakers and gathering information on access and facilities in particular resorts and hotels. Some brochures contain information for disabled people and many companies are happy to check out details to ensure the holiday will suit your particular requirements.

**Horizon Holidays**, Broadway, Edgbaston Five Ways, Birmingham B15 1BB, tel: 021-632 6282, have an *Easy Access Guide to Accommodation for the Disabled and Infirm* for use with the main brochure.

### Useful Information

**Holiday Care Service**, 2 Old Bank Chambers, Station Road, Horley, Surrey RH6 9HW. Tel: (0293) 774535. Provides free information and advice on holidays for people with special needs. Explain what sort of holiday you would like and what your needs are and they can provide details of those that seem most appropriate - leaving you to make your choice and reservation. (A new guide, *Providing for Disabled Visitors*, advises hotel proprietors on how to meet the needs of disabled people.)

*Holidays for Disabled People 1986*, £2, published by RADAR, 25 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB. A comprehensive guide to holidays both at home and abroad.

The Spastics Society no longer runs a holiday advisory service.



# OUTLOOK

## Books

### Ageing: An Adventure in Living

Edited by Sally Greengross  
(Souvenir Press, Human Horizons Series, £7.95 hardback, £4.95 paperback)

The introduction and seven chapters in this book are written by different people, all with considerable experience in their own fields. This leads to stylistic variations and a rather fragmented approach to the many facets of growing older. There is some repetition, particularly of population statistics and details about improved life expectancy.

There is also some confusion about the readership. Some parts – even of the same chapters – are addressed directly to people approaching retirement, while others offer information and guidelines to relatives and to professionals and volunteers involved with elderly people.

Several of the chapters give practical, down-to-earth advice and details about health, diet and exercise, educational and leisure activities, income, home ownership and moving, and ways to improve warmth, comfort and safety. But I found "Changing Relationships", "Old People – New Lives: Residential Care" and "Coping with Death and Bereavement" more interesting and thought-provoking.

The book as a whole has a progressive and optimistic outlook and one hopes that it will encourage central and local government to take a more positive attitude towards older people in their areas.

I would not, however, choose this book as a present for an elderly person or anyone facing retirement. *Ageing for Beginners* (Basil Blackwell, 1981), written by Mary Stott when she was approaching her seventies, is easier to read and more personally challenging.

Taken together, the two books provide very real evidence of the varied and valuable contributions that can be – and are being – made by the older generation, proving that "ageing is an experience worth having".

Margaret Morgan

### Working together with handicapped children

Edited by Margaret Griffiths and Philippa Russell  
(Souvenir Press, Human Horizon Series, £8.95 hardback, £5.95 paperback)

This book answers the questions new parents of a handicapped child want to ask but don't because they are so often completely overwhelmed by the initial shock of a handicapped child in the family.

It is direct and informative, giving possible causes and explanations of the various handicaps, and the effects on the body.

Having such a book at the outset of working with a handicapped child gives parents time to assimilate and digest the information stage by stage as the implications of the handicap become more understandable.

The chapter on assessment gives a positive approach to the child's abilities, rather than a dismal catalogue of disabilities, and the feeling of achievement is put first.

Naming definitive systems, such as Paget Gorman or Makaton, in the chapter on com-

munications gives both parents and professionals a definite avenue to follow rather than a nebulous comment of "there must be something but we're not sure exactly what".

As both parent and teacher of physically and mentally handicapped children, I welcomed the emphasis on the multi-disciplinary team and the inclusion of the parent as a central figure. Those already using this approach and early intervention see the universal benefits to the child, his family and society.

The book aims to clarify problems and identify principles which will bring practical support to all concerned in the care of the child, and it achieves its aims.

It is well planned; it reads easily, and each chapter is strengthened by good references to additional reading for both parent and professional.

The over-riding impression is one of a positive approach to increase the child's ability.

*This book is available from The Spastics Society library at Park Crescent. Tel: 01-636 5020, ext 241.*

Celia Laundon

### Ins and Outs of Car Choice, A guide for elderly and disabled people

(Department of Transport, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1 Tel: 01-212 3434. £1.45)

If you have just become disabled and are in the fortunate position to have a lot of money to want to buy a brand new car and pay for all the adaptations, then this is the handbook you need. It outlines all the problems you may encounter, from the minute you get into the car till you get out again.

It covers the problems of dimensions of the car, how best to get in and out of the car, what to grip onto to help you in and out, how easy it is to use the seat belt, and whether or not you can close the door once you are seated.

The Department of Transport has obviously looked at all the problems and recommends solutions. It has also given examples of things like door sill heights from the latest cars on the market.

If, however, you have been disabled all your life and do not have a lot of money, the booklet is not much help.

You are probably already aware of the problem of getting in and out of a car and will have sought and found your own solution.

Not many disabled people can afford a brand new car, and so the examples given in the book do not apply.

The Department of Transport has taken a lot of trouble producing this booklet but it is certainly not something I would recommend most people to dash out and buy.

Hillary Lane

*Someone to Care For*, previewed last month, costs £2.50.

### Look out for...

**Special performance at Covent Garden.** The Royal Ballet will be performing *Giselle*, *The Nutcracker* and *Manon* on 10-16 January, with no seat in the house costing more than £3 and access for 20 wheelchairs. This is a new scheme called Paul Hamlyn Week, intended for members of the public who have never seen a ballet at the Opera House.

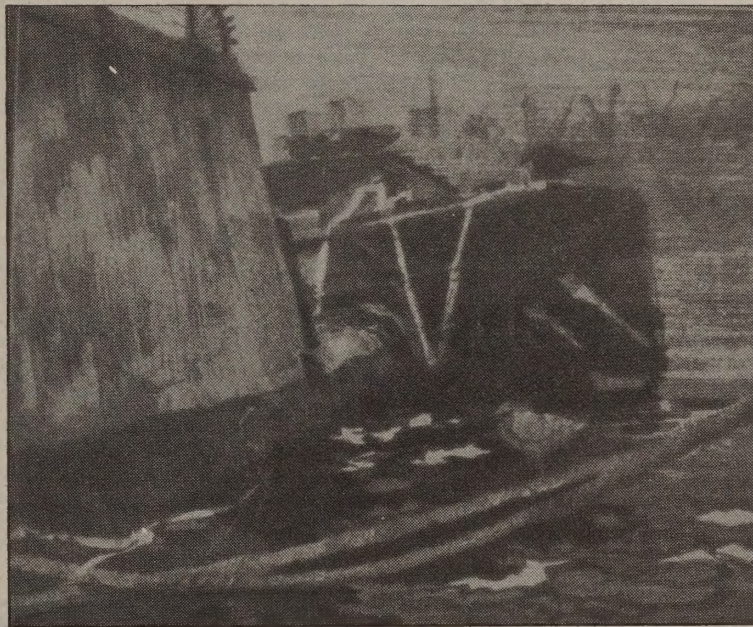
## Art

### CONQUEST art exhibition

CONQUEST, the society for art for the physically handicapped, feel it necessary to label each work in their current exhibition not only with the artist's name, but also with his or her disability. I don't agree – you don't need to make allowances to enjoy the majority of works in this bright and varied exhibition.

On the other hand, what the indication of disability does show is that the variety of work is partly due to the range of artists' disabilities. Although the subject matter of the paintings is often rather too conventional (where, for example, were the nudes?) it is clear that CONQUEST's guidance has helped people even with the severest disabilities develop an individual means of self-expression.

CONQUEST, a registered charity founded in 1978, arranges art classes and home tuition with the aim of overcoming inactivity in disabled people, also providing materials and information on special techniques which can enable people to discover new abilities and gain self-



Ted Hughes's "Thames Barges".

confidence.

Exhibitions are a regular feature. The highlight of this one for me was the work of Peggy Taub, represented in just 2 pictures. "Garden Party", a drypoint print,



"Checkmate" by Linda Hursey.

Further details from Camilla Whitworth Jones, The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London WC2. Tel: 01-240 1066.

**The Venturers Drama Group** for the Visually Handicapped are presenting *Quartermaine's Terms* by Simon Gray at the Stanhope Theatre, Longford Street, London NW1, on 23-25 January. For further details contact Keith Rubidge. Tel: 01-263 6589.



Peggy Taub's "Mrs Pernickety, Mrs Persniff and Rabbit."

shows an elephant wandering through what looks like rows of cabbages, bearing a baby elephant and 3 people on its back. One passenger carries a bright blue umbrella or parasol. You can't help smiling at the quiet surrealism of the subject, admiring the simplicity of design and wondering what memories (a childhood in India perhaps?) or dreams sparked off the work.

Her other picture, "Mrs Pernickety, Mrs Persniff and Rabbit", a watercolour drawn into with black ink, is also intriguing – charming would be the word for her works if that did not make them sound twee.

Ted Hughes stood out as an extremely accomplished painter. His large oils, "Summer

Time" and "Hastings Beach", dominated the exhibition. But I preferred a smaller print called "Thames Barges" – a bold composition like his other works, in moody blues, grey and orange.

Two works based on checks caught the eye. Linda Hursey's painstakingly painted "Checkered Tunnel" is a nightmarish combination of the threatening (flames falling like rain, the checkered tunnel itself) and the beautiful (butterflies, an Egyptian-looking woman). Beryl Myers' "Checkmate" is an interesting experiment in form, chess players combining with the chess pieces and board.

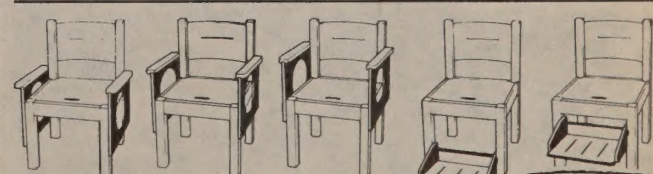
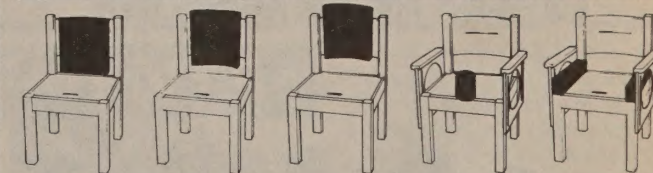
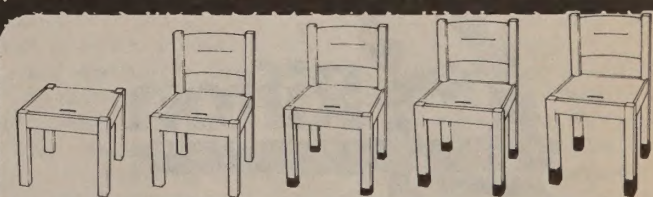
Kenneth Biggleston, who paints with his mouth, has developed a very distinctive style – his "Tug of War" consists of no more than about 100 bold brush strokes, but with a remarkable cartoon-like simplicity it conveys the strain, the pain and the humour of the situation.

Even simpler, and also achieving effect with the bare minimum, is Victor Huskisson's "Voodoo" – multicolour blots of paint applied to red paper, folded in half and then painted into to define two purple monkeys and several eerie shapes.

Other artists who impressed were Richard Wilkins, Robert Dean, Tom Marsh, Ronald Spicer, Richard Wallace, Martin Biggleston, Jack Gooby, Frank Holloway and Leslie Steene.

Simon Crompton

*The exhibition continues in the Gallery, The Stock Exchange, London EC2, until 17 January.*



**system 13**

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# Share Your Problems

With Margaret Morgan

## Please explain the SPS

"I find the titles of the Manpower Services Commission's various new schemes rather confusing. I had no sooner got used to SIGs (Sheltered Industrial Groups) than they became SPS (Sheltered Placement Schemes). Can you explain the conditions for SPS, please?"

I do agree with you that the use of initials for different schemes and services can be irritating, especially when they are banded about and everyone but you seems to know what they stand for!

The Sheltered Placement Scheme is really just a more appropriate title for Sheltered Industrial Groups, which originated as a scheme for small groups of severely disabled people to work in ordinary industrial or commercial settings alongside the rest of the workforce.

The SIG scheme has been gradually extended to cover an increasing number of disabled people placed as individuals, as well as in groups, in a wide variety of employment settings.

The Manpower Services Commission has two leaflets about the Sheltered Placement Scheme, a general one and another mainly for employers. These leaflets explain how the scheme works and encourages firms, voluntary bodies and people with disabilities to find out more about the facilities in their area.

The SPS involves a sponsor, which employs the disabled person, and a host firm, which provides the worker and pays the sponsor for the work done. The sponsor must be a voluntary organisation (The Spastics Society was one of the first approved sponsors), a local authority or Remploy. The Manpower Services Commission approves the schemes and shares the cost with the sponsor.

Probably the best way to clarify the position is to give an example.

Alan, a young man with cerebral palsy, is registered as disabled and considered suitable for sheltered employment. An opportunity arises for Alan in the stores of a local garage and the garage owner agrees to pay 50 per cent of the standard rate for Alan's work. The Spastics Society agrees to sponsor Alan and the MSC approves the scheme. The garage is the host firm and pays 50 per cent of the weekly wage to The Spastics Society. The Spastics Society is the sponsor and employs Alan, paying him the full rate for the job. It then reclaims the other 50 per cent from the MSC.

In many ways this is a very attractive scheme and it merits much wider local publicity, especially amongst firms which could provide opportunities for young people with disabilities on the completion of the Youth Training Scheme programme.

## Does YTS raise hopes - only to dash them?

"Although I agree that the Youth Training Scheme must be of benefit to many young people leaving school, I do wonder about boys and girls with severe disabilities who may never be able to get a job. Might it not be raising their hopes, only to dash them to the ground at the end of the training period? What do you think?"

As you probably know, views differ about how the present YTS operates. But some changes are being made and a new 2 year scheme will be introduced in April 1986.

As far as young people with disabilities are concerned, some improvements have already been made and various organisations, notably RADAR, are monitoring the results.



Simon Crompton

For instance, a young person with a disability can apply at any time between his or her 16th and 21st birthdays and, in the new scheme, there will be an opportunity for an additional 6 months training before or after the 2 year period.

My own view is that the majority of young people with disabilities should be encouraged to continue their education for as long as appropriate and then apply for training under YTS. YTS will provide them with experience, not only of work but of mixing with a much wider range of people in different settings.

Sadly, owing to the present economic situation, many young people will find it very difficult to obtain jobs at the end of their training and so trainees with disabilities will not be facing this problem alone.

Good support and positive counselling are very important at this time and I do agree with you that it is essential not to give any young people false hopes about their future.

The Sheltered Placement Scheme, described above, may well provide opportunities for young people with more complex disabilities at the end of their training period.

Leaflets about both schemes are available from your local Job Centre or direct from the Manpower Services Commission.

Further information about the follow-up of the Youth Training Scheme can be obtained from Judith Male, RADAR, 215 Mortimer Street, London W1N 8AB. Tel: 01-637 3400.

## CLASSIFIED

### For Sale

**BEC MOTORIZED SCOOTER.** Ideal for shopping complete with basket, battery and battery charger. Cost £550. Accept £350. Contact Mrs Ann Woodford. Tel: (0895) 440972 (West Drayton).

**FORD TRANSIT CONCORDE MOTOR-CARAVAN.** M Reg, 48,000 miles, re-sprayed '84. Aircraft type toilet, electric levellers, twin batteries, powerful alternator. Rear rack/ramp for wheelchair/luggage. Disabled owner acquiring smaller vehicle. £3,000 ono. Tel: (0977) 620235.

**TOYOTA HIACE VAN** with side lift. L-reg, full MOT. Tel: 0260 278559.

**17 in. VESSA VITESSE ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR.** Kerb climber, used 10 times. £1,200 ono. Tel: (099 382) 3381 (day). OT Dept, Bradwell Grove Hospital, Burford, Oxon.

### Holidays

**VARCOE HOUSE HOLIDAY FLATS.** Cornish Spastics Society. Two well-equipped self-catering flats, each to sleep up to 6 people, especially adapted for disabled people. Level access to flats and nearby sandy beach. Ample parking. Seasonal price range £40-£60 per week. Off season rates details from Booking Manager, Mr L E Elliott, 3 Bosvean Gardens, Illogan, Nr Redruth. Tel: (0209) 218650.

**TRESIZE COTTAGE** purpose-designed holidays for families with a wheelchair. Send sac for full details to: Mrs Russell, Tresize, St Martin, Helston, Cornwall TR12 6EF.

### Find-a-Friend

**PENFRIENDS** wanted by 19 year-old woman. Hobbies include typing, reading, swimming, listening to pop music. Please write to Mary Gaul, Barrett Cheshire Home, Herbert Street, Dublin 2, Ireland.

# What's On

## Courses at Castle Priory

### MAKATON Workshop Weekend

24-26 January. Please apply to Castle Priory for further details.

**Learning with Rebuses in Mainstream and Special Schools** - a practically-based programme with emphasis on encouraging independence by developing concepts and language skills. 1 February. Inclusive fee £18.

**Behavioural Difficulties in Children with Special Needs** - a workshop on behaviour modification, observation techniques and goal planning, based on the work of Malcolm Jones at Beech Tree School. 3-5 February. Tuition £47, residence £38.

**The Portage Teaching Materials** - a practical workshop on the use of the Portage materials in home teaching and in other settings. 5-7 February. Tuition £56, residence £38.

**Housing and Residential Accommodation for People with Disabilities** - a practical course for architects, occupational therapists and administrators. 12-14 February. Tuition £70, residence £38.

**A School Nurse Workshop in Health Education** - to take school nurses through the practical stages of preparing and presenting materials and developing their role in mainstream and special education. 17-19 February. Tuition £47, residence £38.

**Signed English - an Advanced Course** - for those who have already attended an introductory signed English course, based on British Sign Language. 5-7 March. Tuition £50, residence £42.

## Conferences and Leisure

**The Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom** is holding a public meeting on 26 January at 6.30pm to discuss media treatment and employment of people with disabilities. It is hoped that this will form the basis of guidelines for media workers and proprietors. It takes place at NALGO headquarters, 1 Mabledon Place, London WC1 in the ground floor Assembly Room (wheelchair accessible from Flaxman Terrace, where parking space should also be available). For further details contact Julianne Dickey from the Campaign at 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG. Tel: 01-437 2795.

**Confusion in Old Age** is a residential conference on 29-31 January organised by Age Concern England at Seebohm House, Maryland Drive, Northfield, Birmingham. The fee is £60. Further information from Age Concern training department, 60 Pitcairn Road, Mitcham, Surrey. Tel: 01-640 5431.

**Saturday Workshops** are being held at Banstead Place Assessment Centre in conjunction with East Surrey College, for anyone working in the special needs area and responsible for physical and emotional care, or educating young people. The course on 1 February is on the use of drama therapy techniques with young people with special needs. Each day cost £10 and runs from 10am to 4.30pm. For further details of these and the other courses contact Ann Worrall, East Surrey College, Gatton Point, Redhill, Surrey RH1 2JX. Tel: (0737) 72611, ext. 252.

**Microelectronic Aids for Disabled Children** is a course being held on Saturday 8 February at Martindale School, Martindale Road, Hounslow, Middx TW4 7HE. It will cover many of the more significant recent developments and how they can be applied to the needs of disabled children. There will also be an exhibition of aids and equipment. Fees: £9 for families, £7 for professionals, £6 for voluntary workers, students, disabled people, relatives and £5 for ACTIVE (national) members. Further information from Philip Harris at Martindale School.

**Sexuality and Disability Workshops.** Three 4-day workshops are being held in March in Bournemouth, Manchester and Cork to discuss personal experiences, consider what influences sexuality and relationships, and make personal action plans. They are part of a research project for the World Health Organisation and will form the basis of its recommendations to governments, health professionals, planners and administrators. Each workshop will be run by experienced group leaders. All expenses will be paid. If you are interested in taking part contact Joyce Rosser, Family Planning Association, Education Unit, 27-35 Mortimer Street, London W1N 7RJ. Tel: 01-636 7866.

## LONDON BOROUGH OF HARINGEY

### BOROUGH SECRETARIAT

## COMMITTEE SECRETARY

### LESBIAN AND GAY MEN'S SUB-COMMITTEE

THIS IS A RE-ADVERTISEMENT AS THE GRADE WAS PREVIOUSLY MIS-STATED

Salary: £10,632 to £11,295 or £11,607 to £12,261  
Grade SO1 or SO2 within a range grade of Scale 5 to SO2

Haringey Council is committed to equal opportunities. One part of this policy is to ensure the provision of a fair deal for the lesbians and gay men who work, live or study in the Borough; accordingly, a Lesbian and Gay Unit is now being recruited and a new Sub-Committee has been established.

An experienced Committee Secretary is required to service this Sub-Committee; applicants must have direct experience of the lesbian or gay communities and should have experience of committee work at a senior level, preferably in a local authority or similar body. You should be full conversant with Committee procedures and be able to work on your own initiative. You will attend the Sub-Committee as the Borough Secretary's representative and will also act as a link with the six community-based sub-groups which will report to the Sub-Committee. There will also be other duties within the Committee group in which this Sub-Committee is based (Community Affairs/Education/Social Services). Attendance at evening meetings will be required, for which overtime is paid (or time off in lieu).

For an application form and job description please telephone 881-6065 (24 hr. answering service) quoting reference MS/GLCS or send a self-addressed envelope to M. Shah (Ref. GLCS), Civic Centre, PO Box 264, London N22 4LE.

CLOSING DATE—17th January 1986

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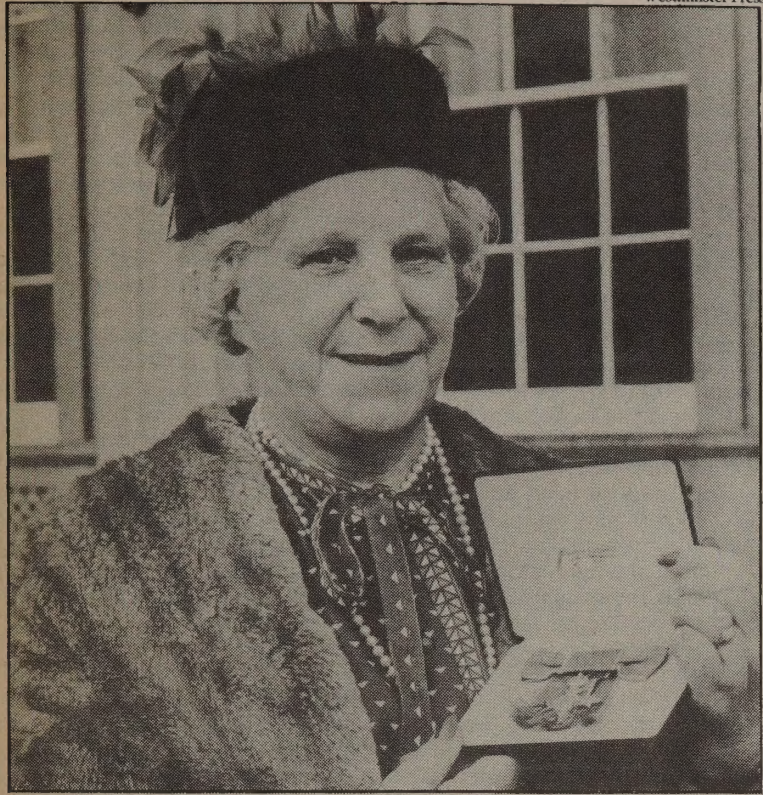
A wide variety of special furniture and equipment for the handicapped child  
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# PEOPLE

## Should it be for bravery?

Westminster Press



**Mrs. Joyce Smith**, chairman of The Spastics Society, received her OBE on 12 December. But having fractured two ribs in a fall the day before, she was in great pain at Buckingham Palace and at the opening of Beech Tree North immediately afterwards. "The doctor said they're cracked all along," she says. "Perhaps someone will find me a spare one." She hopes to be back at work in the New Year.

### New MSC agency manager

**Gerry Cheetham**, 51, is the new manager of The Spastics Society's MSC Community Programme National Managing Agency in Middlesbrough. He started on 9 December.

He has 28 years' experience in local government, and worked as chief administrative officer at a North Yorkshire district council. "I have a great deal of experience in cutting through red tape," he says.

At present there are 108 people working under The Spastics Society's agency, but it is hoped that the Manpower Services

Commission will approve more places, and there might be 200 by April.

"Obviously some Community Programme schemes have grown too quickly," he says, "but The Spastics Society is going along the right lines making sure that it can walk before it runs. My aim is to produce quality schemes rather than quantity."

Gerry Cheetham is a chartered secretary, a member of the Society of Commercial and Company Accountants, and a member of the British Institute of Management.

### Another award for the Society

The Spastics Society's spring mailing appeal has won a diploma of merit in the Royal Mail's British Direct Marketing Awards 1985.

The mailing, written by the Society's publicity officer **Alan Durant** and designed by graphic designer **Nigel Tuckett**, appealed for equipment for the

Society's industrial units, and was sent to 850,000 supporters. It consisted of a laser personalised letter and donation form, within a decorated first day cover.

The mailing produced a 25 per cent improvement on the income raised the previous year.

First prize went to the Bradford Disaster Appeal.

Richard Long



**Dame Vera Lynn**, vice president of the Stars Organisation for Spastics, and **Pierre Picton** the clown, at the tombola stall of this year's SOS Christmas Ball. The Ball raised £7,000 on the night and is expected to bring a total of £23,000. 790 guests came to the Hilton Hotel, Park Lane on 1 December, including Tim Rice, Marty Webb, Sir John Mills, Billy Connolly, Pamela Stephenson and Lorraine Chase.

## LOCAL GROUP NEWS

Edited by Simon Crompton

Harriet Harman, Shadow Minister for Social Services and Labour MP for Peckham, opened the first assessment and aids centre in Coventry last month.

The Bettman Centre is jointly funded by Coventry Social Services and the Coventry and District Spastics Society.

With a physio department upstairs, the downstairs aids centre is divided into kitchen, bedroom and bathroom sections.

"It's excellent that we've been able to work together like this," says Peter Collard, chairman of the Coventry and District Spastics Society. "We hope to carry on with similar projects."

Harriet Harman is pictured right talking to a disabled person trying out the centre's stairlift. She is a member of The Spastics Society's social services committee.

## Shadow minister opens aids centre

Coventry Evening Telegraph



## Brain scanner for baby care

J. P. Photography



**Jessica Smith** (second left) presents the cheque to deputy hospital administrator **Stephen Lowe**. To the left is **Isobel Sholton**, and to the right of Mr Lowe are consultant, paediatrician **Howard Fleet**, and **Frances Rose** the midwifery sister.

The South Bucks Spastics Society is buying a brain scanner for High Wycombe General Hospital's special care baby unit.

The scanner, which costs £3,500, will complement a £24,000 body scanner being bought by the special care baby unit club.

"We read about their appeal in the local press," says Jessica Smith, chairman of the South Bucks Group. "We really

thought we ought to do something as well because The Spastics Society was a pioneer in the research of handicap, especially pre-natal and neonatal care."

The scanner measures the electrical rhythms in the brain, and can detect abnormal waves which can be useful in diagnosis.

Jessica Smith presented the cheque to the special care baby unit on 10 December.

## Sully works rewarded for contribution to community

Beaumont Products, Sully Works, has won first prize in a local award for boosting community spirit.

Sully beat 60 other entrants, many of them large industries.

The Barry Centenary Award was organised by Barry Town Council and the *South Wales Echo*. Willy Guppy and Stephen Whitehead, workers at Sully, accepted a plaque and a cheque for £250 in November.

The Mayor of Barry nominated the works after a visit where he saw for himself what Sully offered for people with disabilities.

Staff and workers were on hand at an exhibition of all the entrants at Barry Memorial Hall.

The contact gained there with other industries did Sully a lot of good, feels Iris Gill, development co-ordinator.

"They've taken us under their wing," she says, "and provided some equipment for our self-improvement schemes in education, social and domestic skills and computer skills."

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Action for Research into Multiple Sclerosis (ARMS)** funds research into MS, holds meetings and conferences, has 43 centres around the country and offers a telephone counselling service. ARMS centres provide places to meet, therapy and a wide range of facilities, including oxygen therapy. The telephone counselling service is available from London (01-222 3123), Birmingham (021-476 4229) and Glasgow (041-637 2262). For more details contact ARMS, 11 Dartmouth Street, London SW1H 9BL. Tel: 01-222 3224.

**Working Together for Access** - a guide to the work of local access groups, has been published by the Centre on Environment for the Handicapped. It includes sections on what access groups do, profiles of 6 access groups, how planning applications are dealt with and how

access groups can influence the planning process. Available at £2.50 from the Access Committee for England, 126 Albert Street, London NW1 7NF. Tel: 01-482 2247.

**Rights Guides** to social security benefits. The Child Poverty Action Group has published new editions of *The National Welfare Benefits Handbook*, which covers the field of means tested benefits, and *The Rights Guide to Non Means Tested Social Security Benefits*. Each book costs £4 (£2 for claimants) from CPAG, 1 Macklin Street, London WC2.

**Rehab Network** is a new, independent, quarterly publication for people concerned with rehabilitation and employment issues in disability. Areas covered include vocational rehabilitation for people with physical disabilities, learning difficulties and ex-psychiatric patients, shel-

tered work, databases, government policy and research. Price £2.50 or £9.50 for an annual subscription (cheques made payable to City University) from The Editor, Rehab Network, Rehabilitation Resource Centre, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB.

**Rural Walks around Richmond** is a collection of 20 routes, all of which can be covered in wheelchairs, and instructions for wheelchair rambles appear at the end of 8 of the walks. One walk is designed specifically for people in wheelchairs and takes in the disused Lonsdale Road reservoir which is now a wild life sanctuary. It contains details of parking. £1 (plus 22p postage) from Michael Jarvis, 18 Martingales Close, Ham Common, Richmond.

**Museums and Galleries** in Great Britain and Ireland, 1986 edition, is now available with details of around 1500 museums and galleries. £2.50 from bookshops.



## Authorities refuse to enforce their parking powers

Able-bodied people who use parking spaces designated for disabled people could be liable to prosecution and a fine of up to £400 – if local authorities would only designate the spaces properly and enforce the regulations.

People abusing the orange badge could be liable to a similar maximum fine.

Under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, local authorities have the power to make orders about disabled people's parking. They can be enforced by a fixed penalty notice or prosecution.

Authorities were reminded of their powers in a circular sent out by the Department of Transport in September 1984. But so far there has been no response.

"As far as we know, and the Access Committee for England and the Department of Transport know, not a single local authority is properly designating places or enforcing the regulations," says Tim Shapley, honorary secretary of the Joint Committee on Mobility for the Disabled.

Evidence continues to flow in from representatives to the Joint Committee that able-bodied people are abusing places reserved for disabled people. They can get away with it because the places are indicated only by advisory signs and markings and therefore cannot be enforced.

To try and counter the apathy of local authorities, the Joint Committee sent an information sheet to them all last month and to disability organisations in England, Wales and Scotland.

"We want local organisations to get on to their local authorities and say 'you have the powers, we want you to use them'," says Tim Shapley.

## Sharing, caring co-operation

The Spastics Society could benefit by around £400 a day before March from a new scheme initiated by a leading business company.

For every contract that Harvard Securities completes between 9 December and 7 March, the company will commit £1 to The Spastics Society under their Share Care Scheme. Its current rate of contracts, either buying or selling, is 400 a day.

"I strongly believe that the City has a moral obligation to become involved in charitable work," said Tom Wilmot, managing director of Harvard.

## Radical bill for disabled people

*Continued from page 1*  
stay hospitals.

And through amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1971 it seeks to make local planning authorities give more consideration to the access needs of disabled people.

Carers will also benefit from the bill. They will have the power to call for an assessment of their needs when they feel unable to cope.

At the launch of the bill on 19 December, Labour MP Alf Morris, who was responsible for the 1970 Chronically Sick and Disabled Act, pointed out the degree of public support for the measures in the bill.

"This bill is about easing the tragedy and stopping the

## Arts Council Code relies on gentle persuasion

This month a Code of Practice on Arts and Disability will go out to all the companies and organisations subsidised by the Arts Council and those in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Responding in part to the Attenborough Committee's report on *Arts and Disabled People*, published last May, the Code seeks to promote good practice in meeting the needs of people with many different disabilities.

Luke Rittner, secretary-

general of the Arts Council, recognises that there are more barriers for disabled people than physical access.

"That is why our code seeks the co-operation of arts organisations in ensuring that positive attitudes towards people with disabilities are demonstrated in all aspects of their work, including employment, their programme of activities and the attitudes of their staff – from the box office personnel and gallery

attendants to managers and technicians 'behind the scenes'," he said.

"We are, of course, aware that in the present economic climate it is unrealistic to expect arts organisations to remove all the barriers," he added, "but the Council is looking for a commitment on the part of organisations to make a positive start."

Each organisation will receive a resource pack providing information, ideas and guidance on how to implement the Code. By the end of September they should have prepared their action plans. Over the following 6 months there will be discussions with the Arts Council and during the year beginning April 1987 some action will be expected.

The Code has been welcomed as a step in the right direction and an encouragement to regional arts associations and clients to improve provision for disabled people.

But for some people it does not go far enough, fast enough.

"There is an urgent need to translate theory into practice", said the Carnegie Council for the Arts and Disabled People, successor to the Attenborough Committee, which is pressing

for recommendations to be implemented.

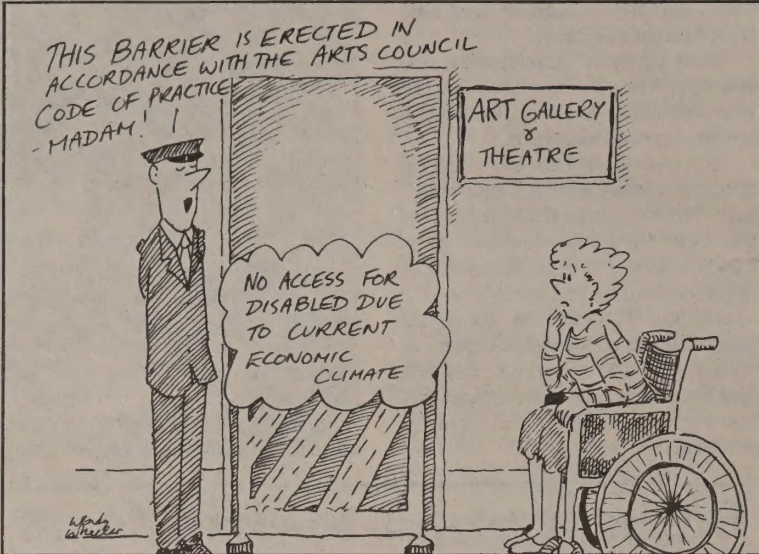
"We hope that the Arts Council will require immediately of all its clients that, at the very least, they should provide along with their general publicity information details of the facilities, or lack of them."

It also wants a time limit set for completing structural alterations to make places accessible.

"Once again the emphasis is on persuasion and nobody seems to want to consider what would happen if persuasion fails," said Chris Davies of The Spastics Society who is a member of Fair Play, Campaign for Equality in the Arts. "Unless this option is considered, the document might just as well stay on the shelf."

He would like to see a scale of penalties for recalcitrant organisations, culminating in a cut off of funding in line with the Attenborough Report.

★ The Carnegie Council is planning a major conference in Manchester in September that will include arts exhibitions, workshops and papers. Chris Davies is the only disabled member of the planning committee.



## Taxicard stays but 4 boroughs back out

The London Taxicard scheme will continue, following widespread fears about its future, and a campaign mounted by The Spastics Society and 3 other charities to save it.

It will be funded by individual London boroughs. But 4 boroughs – Bromley, Sutton, Barnet and Hillingdon – are refusing to participate, so disabled people in these areas will no longer be able to use taxis at reduced rates.

The London Co-ordinating Committee of Successor Councils met on 18 December to decide how the scheme should be funded once the GLC is abolished in April next year.

23 boroughs voted to continue Taxicard in its present form. It is possible, however, that Taxicards will no longer be distributed from Post Offices.

★ The Federation of London Dial-a-Rides has published a research paper on *Comparative Costs of Dial-a-Rides* written by Stephen Potter. It is available from FoLdAR, St Margarets, 25 Leighton Road, London NW5 2QD, price £3 plus 50p postage and packing.

## Help for some, "a major crisis" for others

*Continued from page 1*  
person receiving present additions totalling £23.50 would have his/her entitlement cut by almost one-half.

(–) Where someone is entitled to several premiums, only one premium beyond family premium can be claimed, e.g. a lone parent who is disabled will get a family premium or a disability premium, not both.

*Comment: How can the Government justify its assumption that the 2 premiums would overlap? How can the extra cost of disability be offset by a premium designed for the costs of lone parenthood, and vice versa?*

### Social Fund

(–) A Social Fund will replace payments for single and urgent needs. It will be operated at the discretion of local DHSS officers with no right of appeal for claimants. It will be cash-limited. *Comment: How can you cash limit a demand-determined benefit especially when there are no precedents or guidelines to help officers? Loaning money*

*against future benefit payments will throw many claimants into a downward spiral of debt.*

### Family Credit

(–) Family Credit, replacing Family Income Supplement, will be paid through the man's pay packet.

*Comment: Combined with the down-grading of Child Benefit, this represents a significant transfer of resources from women, the traditional carers of children, to men. Involving employers is likely to deter, rather than encourage, claimants. Making Family Credit details available to employers could lead to the manipulation of wage levels – downwards.*

### Maternity Grant

(–) This £25 "as of right" grant is to be replaced by a means-tested payment of £75 from the Social Fund. If the claimant has saved more than £500, it will not be paid.

### Carers

(–) No change in Carers' Benefit until the disability survey is completed.

*Comment: An opportunity missed to extend Invalid Care Allowance to married women in line with the European directive.*

Legislation is expected early this year, but the changes will not come into force until April 1988.

## Disability Now

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